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nothing unusual in the countenance itself—it is only refined by anguish. Clouds of tears, that refuse to break, bedim the eye. The long night of grief, the sleepless anxiety for her little children, and love to their father, which banishes every trace of bitterness from her countenance, have exhausted her power of weeping. She can no longer shed tears; a single touch near the corner of the mouth tells us too clearly that the grief has struggled convulsively in her heart. It is the first, sharpest, sorrow which has ploughed furrows on her face! The object of her worship reads in its lines how little good fortune she ever had, and how quickly that little has taken flight! Her anguish is self-sacrificing, like her love, simple and inartificial—and so deep, so true, welling forth so copiously from the inmost depths of her heart! She invokes the *mater dolorosa*, the ideal of maternal love; she presents before her the unsuspecting sleeping babe, which, in its touching innocence, has been guilty of no crime. She appeals to maternal love; and when she rises from her knees, in order again to roam through life, this love will comfort and guide her. A whole human life is comprehended in the moment which the picture seizes. The crisis touches the heart by the deep anguish of soul which it depicts, and by the prophetic glimpse it affords us of a long series of daily struggles. But it reveals also the victory of a mother's love, the victory of the female heart, which will hold its ground against the power of misery. Therefore it is that the picture touches and elevates at the same time; therefore it is that the best judges do not hesitate a moment in awarding it the palm of high artistic merit; therefore it is that one feels constrained to halt so long before such a picture, since it cannot fail to spell-bind and enchant every beholder.

FATE OF A CARAVAN IN THE DESERT.

CARAVANS leaving Damascus or Cairo, for the purpose of conveying rich presents to Mecca, demand and obtain an escort of soldiers, commanded by a colonel or general. This chief possesses sufficient authority to enforce his orders; he maintains discipline, sends forward scouts, stations sentinels round the tents at meal-times, and thus manages to keep the plundering Arabs at a respectful distance. The same order and security do not prevail in the majority of the caravans whose errand is merely commercial.

About five years ago a caravan, consisting of one hundred and twenty men and two hundred camels, was conveying various European and Egyptian fabrics and Nubian dates from Dongola to Lobeid. As it approached the well of Way, in Kardofan, six hundred Beni-Jerar Arabs, mounted upon three hundred camels, and led by one of the bravest *aquids*, passed a little to the south of the same well. They were in pursuit of a large flock of sheep belonging to the Kubabich Arabs; the shepherds, who were aware of their approach, had just left the well of Way and reached that of Elai, about a day and a half's journey from the former.

The caravan reposed in fancied security; the improvident merchants of which it was composed not having reconnoitred the desert. The enemy was within a stone's throw, and not one of the party suspected the approach of peril.

The evening before the day fixed for departure, the merchant in command gave orders to collect the camels which had been allowed, as usual, to browse the thorny shrubs of the valley. All were collected with the exception of one, which could not be found. This animal belonged to a merchant, who, fearing to lose it and seeing night approach, commanded his slave to seek traces of it and to follow them.

Upon the ground, crowded with so many camels and men, the slave discovered the track of his master's camel, which led him straight to the encampment of the Arabs, who, doubtless, had taken possession of it. They saw the slave and seized upon him. Time passed away without any news of the camel; the merchant wished to follow the path which his slave had taken, but Abd-el-Kader, from whom these facts are known, dissuaded him and offered to make some research.

He set out, climbed a hill of sand, traversed a narrow

valley, climbed a second hill, and, in the middle of a very dark night, saw before him the fires lighted by the Arabs; protected by the darkness, he stopped an instant, counted the fires and the men, and much excited by what he had seen, speedily regained the encampment of the caravan.

The merchants were at their evening meal; he called them together, told them what he had seen, and invited them to deliberate upon the best course to pursue.

The question was then put: "Shall we set out this night, or shall we wait for daylight?" It would have been much wiser to have adopted the first plan.

The objection which induced them to put off their departure until sunrise was, that when they loaded their camels they would be sure to make a noise, and, therefore, their departure would be discovered by the enemy.

This was true, but the Arabs were asleep; they must first awake and collect their camels. All this would require time, and once on their way, besides that the caravan could change its route, and that it would be difficult to follow the track in the night, they could offer a much more powerful resistance than during the long and difficult operation of loading, which would, without fail, be interrupted on the morrow.

At dawn, as the camel-drivers were engaged in this task, a hundred camels mounted by two hundred men passed into the valley. The men leapt from the backs of the animals and began to run towards the caravan. Those who composed it, thinking that they would have no other enemy to contend with, offered some resistance. They fired on the Arabs, who, according to custom, were only armed with lances; but all at once, just as the caravan had regained a little confidence, a hundred camels appeared from one side and the same number from the other, so that the enemy amounted to four hundred. It would be impossible to describe the confusion and terror which now reigned. Surrounded by the Arabs, the merchants and camel-drivers were quickly massacred; Abd-el-Kader alone, not having received any injury, threw himself upon the ground as though he were dead. An Arab pricked him with his lance, and discovering, by the movement which he made, that he still lived, seized and led him before the *aquid*.

The butchery was ended; but the *aquid*, infuriated by the smell of blood, proposed to tie the unfortunate man to a tree and to kill him by casting javelins at him. He was bound, and upon a sign from the chief, the horrible sport began; but by a singular chance, which he considered a miracle, ten or twelve lances glanced past Abd-el-Kader without touching him. "Assuredly," cried the astonished *aquid*, "you have a tough life, or else God is not willing that you should die; you are free to go where you please." They unbound him, stripped him of his clothing, and he found himself free indeed, but in the midst of the desert with neither food nor clothing. "Well," said the *aquid*, "you do not go? What are you waiting for?" "Where should I go?" replied Abd-el-Kader; "where are my provisions? I have not even a leathern bottle to carry water."

The Arabs were engaged in dividing the dates which they had taken from the Jellabs, and, in order that all might have an equal share, they were patiently counting them one by one. Their chief took thirty, gave them to Abd-el-Kader, and spying a little bottle which did not seem to him to be in very good condition, added it to the present. "Go now," said he, "and may God protect you!" Abd-el-Kader, quite in perplexity as to what direction he ought to take, approached the well to fill his bottle; he then perceived that it leaked; he knew it would be in vain to ask for another, and therefore resolved to remain in the neighbourhood of the well. In the evening the Arabs had disappeared, and this unfortunate man had eaten his thirty dates without being able to appease his hunger. Happily the ravine, which led to the well, was covered with those thorny shrubs, called *Sidr* by the Arabs, and *Rhamnus Lotus* by botanists. The fruit of the *Sidr* formed the food of the *Lotophagi*, and the Arabs, who give the name of *nabak* to this little berry, still use it.

Abd-el-Kader was obliged to content himself with this food; but after a fortnight of this diet he could no longer stand, and had just crawled into a recess of the rock, which he had made his abode, when a Turkish *cavac*, accompanied by an Arab guide, journeying towards Lobeid on a dromedary, approached the well to obtain a fresh supply of water.

Abd-el-Kader had resigned himself to death, but on seeing the travellers at a distance, hope again took possession of his heart; he tried to rise, but, his limbs refusing their service, he began to utter cries and groans, hoping that he should at least be able to make himself heard and obtain relief. "What is that?" said the *cavac*, astonished at the noise. "Some animal, doubtless: shall I send him a ball?" asked he of the Bedouin who accompanied him. "The cries sound like those of a man," answered the guide; "I will go and see." And,

leaping from his dromedary, he directed his steps towards the cavern.

Abd-el-Kader was taken by him to the banks of the well, or rather pool, where the *cavac* invited him to partake of his provisions. The day was employed in burying the bodies of his travelling companions, which yet lay exposed to the sun upon the sand, that was red with their blood. The next day, mounted upon the guide's dromedary, he started for Lobeid, with those who had saved him from a lingering death.

"Passing the well of Way in 1850," says Count d'Escayrac de Lauture, to whom we are indebted for this narrative, "I saw the charnel-house of this caravan, and could have counted the corpses, the majority of which were barely surrounded and covered with a little sand and a few stones, which did not entirely conceal them from sight."

RUSSIAN SERFS AND RUSSIAN NOBLES.

THE whole degrading relations between serf and noble, the position of the Russian peasant before the herd of boyards and princes—slaves and serfs themselves before their despot in St. Petersburg, tyrants and masters at home—is pointedly marked in our engraving of a boyard giving audience to his serfs, on his return to his estates after a long absence. Many efforts have been made to represent the relation of master and servant as pleasing in Russia. Writers, who have visited the country and enjoyed the splendid hospitality of its princely slave-owners, come away and talk demurely of the sufferings they have beheld, slight over all that is disgraceful, and allow only the tinsel show to penetrate the surface.

But a recent tourist gives us facts to deal with.

Not very long ago he penetrated to an estate some seven hundred miles from St. Petersburg. It was a vast territory of some 100,000 acres, with 200 villages, inhabited by wretched serfs, the property of Prince B. . . . He accompanied the tourist, who describes the enthusiasm of the tenantry, as he facetiously calls them, as very great. They came out to receive their master with their *starostes* (elders) at their head; loud shouts filled the air, every one wore his best clothes, and the cold but bright sun shone above. A flag was raised on the summit of the castle, and on reaching the courtyard, speeches were made on both sides; servile on the one, haughty and condescending on the other—a right royal affair altogether. Then dancing, singing, and eating commenced, brandy was freely distributed, and everybody went home, not sober, but merry, the Russians being no friends to the temperance movement. They are slaves, and drinking is peculiarly the vice of slaves.

In ancient days an old boyard made his return to his estates an opportunity for making money. As soon as he had reached his castle, he installed himself in a large audience-chamber, and there seating himself on a throne, his left hand resting on a cushion, he received homage from his vassals. They came crawling on their knees, their eyes on the ground, to the throne of their master, and each deposited in a copper urn a rouble of silver, about three shillings. This tribute once paid, the boyard became affable and friendly with his vassals, according to the customs of his family.

So wedded are the Russians to habit, that though this custom has been abolished, the peasants still bring the rouble, and are really disappointed that the young prince, the descendant of the old boyard, will not take it. They appear to appertain to that family of people whose women do not believe in matrimonial affection when a thrashing is not given them once a week.

The traveller is struck, on arriving upon the territory of a Russian nobleman, with the excellent state of the roads. They are like the walks of a park, turf-ed and bordered by fine trees. But this state of things exists only upon the roads near the castle; the roads at a little distance are horrible. With three exceptions, there are no high roads in the whole vast and so-called civilised Empire of Russia. There are tracts of indefinite width, covered by sand, disfigured by stumps of

trees, crossed by streams, with here and there a wretched imitation of a bridge.

If, however, the roads are bad, travelling is secure; and though accidents are common, the Russian peasantry are so exceedingly obliging and friendly in their disposition, that they will run a mile to assist in getting a carriage out of a bog or deep rut.

The inns are infamous. The traveller who does not bring his food must abstain, and he who does not bring his bed must sleep on the floor. There you lie, travellers and luggage, all pell-mell, close together—so close that, as our tourist says, "we scarcely left space for the vermin to attack us." Filth and discomfort of every kind is the ordinary state of things in these caravanserais; and the Russian nobleman never risks a night in one of them without cooks, beds, cushions, food, and drink.

At Schlussemburg, M. Leouzon le Duc met with the following adventure. He was coming back from Lake Onega. It was bitterly cold. He had been two days and two nights in his carriage. His limbs appeared frozen. At two in the morning he reached the post-house; its rooms were all deserted—no light, no fire, all dark and cold.

"*Malchik! malchik!* Boy! boy!"

A sleepy voice, from under a sheepskin on the floor, answered,

"*Seitchass!* Directly!"

Now in Russia people always say *seitchass*, but they never are ready. He waited for a quarter of an hour, shaking in the cold, and worn by hunger and thirst, while the boy lit his lamp, himself shivering.

"Quick! Fire and tea."

"*Ni mogena!* Impossible!"

"Why impossible?"

"The stoves are all out of order, and will not be mended for two days."

"Fool!" said le Duc.

"But, your excellency, it was very hot yesterday here, and will be hotter still when the stoves are mended."

"What is that to me? Bring me a *samovar*."

The *samovar* is a kind of tea-kettle, which gives out so much heat that it serves at times the purpose of a stove.

"*Ni mogena*," said the boy.

"Why?"

"All the charcoal is burnt, so that the *samovar* cannot be heated. I can give your excellency nothing but a teapot and hot water."

"Hot water!—but where is your fire?"

"We have only some spirits of wine."

And this is the country, the panegyrist of which talk of its rivalling England.

To return to the nobles. Their life in the country, where they are despots, makes up for the humiliation of their town existence. They lord it here, as they are lorded over in St. Petersburg; they receive petitions only on the bended knees of supplicants.